



From the Ambassador's Desk

A Bi-Monthly Update from the U.S. Embassy in Lisbon

March 2016

Versão Portuguesa

PHOTO HIGHLIGHT



TAP's two new routes to USA were presented at the U.S. Ambassador's residence in Lisbon

AMBASSADOR'S MESSAGE

>> **From Ambassador Robert A. Sherman**



The Transatlantic Trade and Investment Partnership:
Sealing the Deal in 2016

If you've heard me speak anytime in the last two years, then you've already heard me say that "economic diplomacy" – boosting our mutually beneficial trade and investment – is my priority here as U.S. Ambassador to Portugal. I'm proud to say that, as it now stands, we are Portugal's largest trading partner outside the European Union. Last year alone, the United States bought €2.6 billion of Portuguese products and Portuguese consumers bought almost €966 million of U.S. products – a 17 percent increase in our total trade compared to 2014. These are some impressive figures, but we can do better.

The Transatlantic Trade and Investment Partnership, or "T-TIP" is about making our relationship even stronger than it already is. As U.S. Trade Representative Michael Froman has said, we want to "make common sense upgrades" to our economic relationship: eliminating tariffs, reducing non-tariff barriers, and simplifying customs procedures. We want to cut the red tape.

And though the benefits are broad, our smallest businesses stand to benefit the most. Unlike for big companies, the complex rules of international trade can sometimes be bewildering for small businesses. They don't have legions of lawyers and armies of consultants to help them navigate their way through tariffs, customs regulations, and sometimes competing product standards. Knocking down these barriers and making the way we develop regulations more transparent and inclusive will unleash the economic potential of these small- and medium-sized enterprises – which represent more than 99 percent of companies in Portugal.

So what's the status? In June 2015, the U.S. Congress passed trade promotion authority, signaling its support for President Obama's trade agenda, including T-TIP. In February, the U.S. joined eleven other Pacific Rim countries in signing the Trans-Pacific Partnership. There is no doubt: President Obama and Congress have given trade a green light, and the United States is prepared to complete T-TIP negotiations this year. But we need to maintain a brisk pace – on both sides. The last round of talks took place February 22 in Brussels, and helped move us towards concluding T-TIP by the end of the year. Let's seal the deal in 2016!

UPCOMING EVENTS

>> **Futurália Education Fair, March 16-19**



FIL, Parque das Nações

The largest education fair for young people in Portugal.

EducationUSA will have representatives from eleven American universities at the fair on March 19 to provide information about studying in the United States.

<http://futuraia.fil.pt/>

>> Workshop "Developing Effective Professional Skills as a Means of Improving Student Success" by Dr. Peter J. Shull, March 7-15



American Corners Portugal

Presented by Dr. Peter J. Shull (Professor of Engineering at Pennsylvania State University)

March 15 – American Corner at IST, Lisbon

March 14 – American Corner at FCT-UNL, Lisbon

March 11 – American Corner at University of Aveiro

March 7 – American Corner at University of the Azores

<https://www.facebook.com/American-Corners-Portugal-470383376411825/>

>> University of Iowa International Writing Program 2016 Fall Residency, March 25 deadline



The U.S. Embassy Lisbon is accepting applications from Portuguese writers to be nominated for the University of Iowa International Writing Program (IWP) 2016 Fall Residency.

Application deadline: March 25

<http://portugal.usembassy.gov/pa/cultural-affairs/iwp.html>

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